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WESTERN EUROPE -- CANADA -- INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

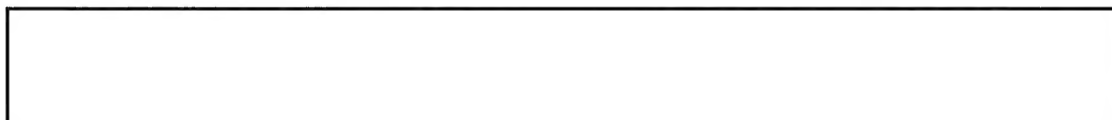


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*C O N T E N T S*

Portuguese Parties Oppose Some  
AFM Proposals. . . . . 1-2

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Portuguese Parties Oppose Some  
AFM Proposals

Portugal's major non-Communist parties are opposing some parts of the Armed Forces Movement's program to formalize its role in the government's decision-making process.

A special committee of the Movement known as the "committee of eight" has begun separate consultations with all political parties on the contents of the seven-point program which the Movement's assembly approved on February 17. According to a Popular Democratic Party leader, his party and the Socialists object to three points:

- prior approval by the Movement of all presidential candidates;
- the arrogation of legislative powers to the military-dominated Council of State;
- the Movement's selection of all future defense and economics ministers.

According to press reports, the Popular Democrats have already formulated counterproposals and the Socialists are in the process of doing so. The Portuguese Communist Party, hoping to expand its own influence through increased military control over the government, is expected to support the Armed Forces Movement in its decision to formalize the military's role in governing the country.

Continued disagreement could interfere with the elections to the constituent assembly now set for April 12. One of the points in the Movement's program requires all political parties to reach


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an understanding regarding certain minimum features of the constitution before they will be allowed to participate in the campaign, which is scheduled to begin on March 3.

1,3 There are no signs of how amenable the Movement will be to changes in its program. In recent months the Movement has allowed considerable debate within its own membership, but once it reaches a decision it has grown accustomed to having that decision accepted as final. Moderate parties will run the risk of having their opposition equated with reaction. Communist Party leader Cunhal lent support to this view earlier this week when he criticized the Socialists and Popular Democrats for attacking Communism "instead of the reaction."

2 Leftist extremists stepped up their tactics on more moderate political elements over the weekend. They disrupted two rallies of the Popular Democrats and a bomb demolished the car of one of the party's leaders in a Lisbon suburb. Prior to this time, the extreme leftists have largely confined such efforts to intimidating the Party of the Democratic Social Center, a slightly right-of-center party.



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